

Today's News - Monday, April 21, 2014

- Boston Proud: as the Boston Marathon kicks off today, we cheer the collaboration of building professionals bringing "accessible design into the homes of those injured in last year's attack."
- Quirk takes a long, thoughtful look at what might be in store for Chile's cultural capital that was recently "brought to its knees by vicious forest fires": government proposals don't quite cut it, but it's "a country with 3,500 architecture students that produces 1,400 architects a year, and 12,500 victims have been left without homes. Together, surely innovative solutions can be thought up and executed" (look at Medellín, Colombia).
- Marshall minces no words about the upside of tearing down inner-city highways, but "what is needed is a game plan for doing it, and a coherent vision of the city that will emerge in their absence."
- Lamster laments that "ad hocism reigns" in Dallas, "a city of grand ambition," but no "guiding vision that unites these sometimes conflicting plans - our plans are at once too susceptible to meddling, yet somehow inflexible in the face of changing priorities."
- Hough on why it's so hard for the "coveted creative class" to find "neighborhoods with lots of character": "Maybe it is because we are trying too hard. We all know the broken window theory, but need to stop overcompensating against it all the time."
- Simon on why "even the most practically engineered buildings need to be endearing" if they're to endure.
- Betsky is hard-pressed to find anything good to say about Piano's new Whitney Museum: it's "big, boxy, and boring. Is there any hope? I can only hope for interior redemption."
- Kennedy on the critical cries against MoMA's expansion plans - and its director: "There are a number of us...who don't want to see the museum become a mere entertainment center," says Agnes Gund.
- Saffron, on the other hand, cheers NIMBYs and developer finding "harmony" re: redesign of planned tower on Philly's Schuylkill riverfront: "the big surprise isn't just that the new version is superior; it's that both sides enthusiastically agree it's better."
- Kolson Hurley reports on Walmart's "sharp departure from its usual formula" by scaling down and building residential up in a Washington, D.C. neighborhood.
- Chicago's mayor gives marching orders to civic leaders: "Find spot for the George Lucas museum" - serious efforts to ensue.
- Eyefuls of the eight impressive shortlisted teams in the running for the UK's Milan Expo 2015 pavilion (can you match names to designs?).
- Pettersen parses Crosbie's crowdsourcing design feature on ANN, and tools around Arcbazar: "it's an intriguing way for clients to get ideas from trained designers - it is a great resource."
- Welton is wowed by the SCADpads: "like the 19th century warehouse, the mid-century modern parking deck could be transformed soon into the trendiest loft space of the 21st century."
- Bernstein gets a lot of architects to wax poetic about their memories of the '64-65 World's Fair, and how it inspired these "designers-to-be."
- Bucky's much-loved Dome Home in Carbondale, IL, is getting a much-needed restoration (great vintage pix, too!).
- Taiwan- and Shanhair architects take home the 8th Far Eastern Architectural Design Award (and a nice purse).

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Architects Rally with Boston: A team of building professionals joined the state's effort to bring accessible design into the homes of those injured in last year's attack at the Boston Marathon...The result has been a collaborative, streamlined approach to pro-bono work...More than 70 architects and designers have signed up to help... -- Renovate for Recovery; Boston Society of Architects/BSA; Dana Cohen/Patrick Ahearn Architecture; Dawn Guarriello/Design Partnership; Gretchen Schneider Rabinkin; Robert Onofrey; Schneider Rabinkin; Michael McHugh/Davis Square Architects - Architect Magazine

After the Wildfires: How Will Chile Rebuild Its Informal Communities? Valparaiso...UNESCO World Heritage site and cultural capital of Chile...was brought to its knees by vicious forest fires...what the government has so far proposed...seems to ignore the social and urban context that makes it unique...a country with 3,500 architecture students that produces 1,400 architects a year, 12,500 victims have been left without homes. Together, surely innovative solutions at the levels of material, construction, and planning can be thought up and executed... By Vanessa Quirk- ArchDaily

Tearing Down an Urban Highway Can Give Rise to a Whole New City: Three major flaws with the idea that most city interstates are here to stay...This is not to say that the only good highway is a dead one. But the ones that plow through neighborhoods and seal off waterfronts are truly destructive...But should we tear down the inner-city freeways? Yes. Can we? Yes again. What is needed is a game plan for doing it, and a coherent vision of the city that will emerge in their absence. By Alex Marshall- The Atlantic Cities

Dallas is a canvas for change: If the problem, half a century ago, was a paucity of plans, today the opposite might be the case. Dallas, a city of grand ambition, has so many plans you'd think they have them on discount at Wal-Mart...What we don't have is a guiding vision that unites these sometimes conflicting plans. Ad hocism reigns..."Dallas likes the idea of planning, but it doesn't like the practice of planning"... By Mark Lamster -- Vishaan Chakrabarti/SHoP Architects; Brent Brown/CityDesign Studio- Dallas Morning News

Making the case: Why revamping Public Square in downtown Cleveland would be a wise investment: Critics of the \$30 million proposal...argue that revamping the square would be a foolish waste in a struggling city with more urgent needs. On the contrary, the history of great cities...shows that high quality public space is necessary to the revival of any urban neighborhood – and that the economic payoff is often significant. By Steven Litt -- James Corner Field Operations [video +]- Cleveland Plain Dealer

Finding Authenticity: The coveted creative class is in search of neighborhoods and communities with lots of character. Why are such places so hard to find? Maybe it is because we are trying too hard...We all know the broken window theory, but need to stop overcompensating against it all the time. By Mark Hough- PLANetizen

Timeless Buildings Must Speak To Users: The current attention to sustainability too often ignores the need for structures that our great grandchildren will love 100 years out, while still practical and flexible enough for inevitable changes...To endure, even the most practically engineered buildings need to be endearing...The way we make buildings should carry messages to inhabitants long into the future, hopefully: "I care for you, so please care for me." By Mark Simon/Centerbrook Architects- Hartford Courant (Connecticut)

The New Whitney Museum: Big, Boxy, Bad: And boring. Is there any hope? The boxy, dull, and unsophisticated exterior...is unfitting of the museum's ambitions...I am hard pressed to say anything about it other than that it is big, badly proportioned, unrevealing of anything on the inside, and dull in its appearance...I can only hope for interior redemption when the structure opens next year. By Aaron Betsky -- Renzo Piano [images]- Architect Magazine

MoMA's Expansion and Director Draw Critics: The Museum of Modern Art's latest expansion has sharpened complaints from art critics, artists, architects and patrons about the museum's direction and its director, Glenn D. Lowry...complaints...that it has grown too fast and lost much of its soul in courting the crowd..."There are a number of us...who don't want to see the museum become a mere entertainment center"... By Randy Kennedy- New York Times

Harmony over planned riverside high-rise: Usually when neighbors and developers lock horns over a project design, things

turn ugly and stay ugly. There's a happier ending for One Riverside...on the Schuylkill next to the popular riverfront trail...the big surprise isn't just that the new version is superior; it's that both sides enthusiastically agree it's better. By Inga Saffron -- Cecil Baker + Partners [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

Walmart Scales Down and Branches Out: Fort Totten Square in Washington, D.C., designed by Hickok Cole Architects, is a sharp departure from the retailer's usual formula...placing 345 residential units above...four stories of apartments will wrap around two large courtyards, one with a swimming pool. By Amanda Kolson Hurley [slide show]- Architectural Record

Mayor Rahm Emanuel to Chicago civic leaders: Find spot for George Lucas museum: San Francisco is still in the running after offering an alternative, less desirable site. So are other cities..."I wouldn't be doing this if I thought we were being used...This is a real effort. The city is serious. He's serious. And the task force is serious." - Chicago Sun-Times

Shortlisted images of UK's Milan Expo 2015 pavilion revealed: Eight teams in running... -- Amanda Levete/AL_A; Allford Hall Monaghan Morris (AHMM)/Studio Myerough; Asif Khan; Barber Osgerby; David Kohn Architects; Grant Associates; Paul Cocksedge Studio; Wolfgang Buttress Studio [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Arcazaz - Architectural Design Competitions: ...it's an intriguing way for clients to get ideas for projects they are considering from trained designers...Is Arcazaz for everyone who is seeking design services? I think not...But for those seeking designs for projects that aren't too complicated and are looking for a myriad of ideas and possible solutions, I think it is a great resource. By Kriss Pettersen [images]- Entablature

The SCADpad: Affordable Housing Inserted Into Aging Parking Decks: "We've cracked open a new discourse on adaptive reuse, and a model for a new strategy"...Which means that, like the 19th century warehouse, the mid-century modern parking deck could be transformed soon into the trendiest loft space of the 21st century. By J. Michael Welton -- Savannah College of Art and Design- Huffington Post

Architects Remember the 1964-65 World's Fair: 50 years ago, designers-to-be were inspired by architecture's possibilities when they saw the fantastical pavilions in Queens, New York...the fantasies of the fair came back with a vengeance in the "starchitect" era of the 1990s and early 2000s, when technology caught up to the vision. By Fred A. Bernstein -- Philip Johnson; Charles Eames; Eero Saarinen; Kunio Maekawa; Javier Carvajal; Kelly & Gruzen; Ann Marie Baranowski/Jacobs KlingStubbins; James Sanders; Alexander Gorlin; Barry Goranick; Richard Olcott/Ennead; Jonathan Marvel; Thomas Balsley [slide show]- Architectural Record

The Restoration of Buckminster Fuller's Dome Home Kicks Off: First assembled in just seven hours, the 54-year-old geodesic dome in Carbondale, Ill. has fallen into disrepair. -- R. Buckminster Fuller Dome NFP (RBF Dome NFP) [images]- Architect Magazine

Taiwan architect wins Far Eastern Architectural Design Award: ...the aim of the awards is to attract more attention to architecture, as architects and property developers are equally critical to social development. -- Huang Sheng-yuan/Fieldoffice Architects; Rosanna Hu/Lyndon Neri/Neri and Hu Design and Research Office- Taiwan Today

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